

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

March 28, 2006

LB 904

you have to figure out whether you can afford it, and as I went down to the Port-to-Plains Summit last summer, their idea was, and those people are quite a lot farther ahead on expressways than what we are in Nebraska, but their idea was that it's a waste of money to keep pouring concrete and asphalt around metropolitan areas, just so more people will move in there, so you can pour more concrete and asphalt in those areas. Now if you'll look at this map that Senator Johnson had passed out, with Nebraska in the middle there--this big yellow spot that's called Nebraska--look at all the area out in the western end, you might say from Norfolk west. Probably what--350, 400 miles. There aren't any roads whatsoever there, and you wonder why there's economic stagnation in those areas; well, mostly because there is no transportation. Highway 20, as Senator Engel pointed out, from Sioux City across Iowa is all four lane. Now Highway 20, after Interstate 90 came in, there's hardly any traffic on it at all, and all those towns up and down Highway 20 have suffered. If you will look further on west and draw a line from Lymon up to Interstate 76 and 80, and on to Interstate 90, that's what the Heartland expressway system is all about there. That is getting some completion done. Right now from the Interstate 90 down to the Nebraska border is going to be four-lane expressway by 2010. South Dakota is working on that already, and Nebraska hasn't even drawn up any plans what to do about any expressway in western Nebraska. As you stated, those towns along the interstate do quite well. So this is a trade route that's supposed to run from...clear down, if you look down in the bottom of your map, Lubbock, Texas, Amarillo, up to Lymon and across Nebraska, clear into Canada. There's billions of dollars' worth of trade that comes down this road. It goes clear on down to the ports at Corpus Christi. If we're going to sell produce from western Nebraska and South Dakota, that will come through Nebraska, if we have the roads built. So not that I want to take anything away from Senator Johnson's Snowbird Trail, but just so we get a shorter route to Denver isn't the answer. We don't have enough money to do everything, but we should at least finish up something that will do the state some economic good, and probably bring more trade to the Nebraska, especially to the western area out here. There's...the roads that can be built out in western Nebraska would be way cost effective, or way less money than what building the Snowbird